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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 8, 2018, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties. All time shall be equally allocated between the parties, and in no event shall debate continue beyond 9:50 a.m. Each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, shall be limited to 5 minutes.

GUN VIOLENCE IN TRENTON, NEW JERSEY

The SPEAKER. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, a few days ago, at the Trenton Art All Night Festival, a fight between two individuals resulted in a mass shooting; 17 people shot, at least one critically injured. Fortunately, the only casualty—fatality, I should say—was one of the shooters.

Even so, nearly 20 people shot at a community festival dedicated to breathing new life into the city and bringing the community together around something that is positive deserves our attention.

Unfortunately, we have a bad habit of assigning sympathy and coverage only to certain kinds of shootings. In fact, it is safe to say that there are some who believe that there are communities in which gun violence will always be an unavoidable norm. That is false. That is a horrible and destructive stereotype that ignores the underpinning of our conversation about guns.

From access to excessively destructive accessories, guns are the problem.

NRA advocates would argue that in Parkland the shooter got his gun legally. But should an 18-year-old be able to buy a gun, especially when that gun is never going to be used for sport?

Those same advocates would argue that most shootings in urban areas occur with illegally obtained weapons and that no regulation would prevent them. But because we refuse to require registries, we don't know where these guns come from. Perhaps if we did, perhaps if we knew who the first buyer was and which States those illegal weapons came from, they wouldn't end up in the wrong hands.

Mr. Speaker, our country's gun problem isn't a single-sided one. It is multifaceted and will require more than just one angle to solve.

Fortunately, from members of the Gun Violence Prevention Task Force alone, there are more than 70 proposals that seek to address this singular and deadly crisis. I am responsible for two of them: The STOP Online Ammunition Sales Act of 2017 to flag for law enforcement large bullet and ammunition purchases that suggest the kind of stockpiling that precedes an attack; and the Handgun Licensing and Registration bill, which would create the kind of registry that might help us keep more weapons out of the wrong hands.

Earlier this week, I wrote a letter to you, Mr. Speaker, asking for consideration of any one of these 70 bills in honor of the victims of Sunday's shooting. I have yet to receive a response to my question, and with the paralyzing fear that seems to grip my Republican colleagues whenever we mention guns, I don't have high hopes that I will get one.

But I do know that the longer we continue to ignore this problem, the more people will be hurt and the more lives will be lost.

At work, at school, at the grocery store, at the playground, in the homes

with violent partners, by accident during play dates, at the hands of those suffering from mental illness, with or without law enforcement being present, whether or not someone in the audience or classroom is armed, guns have always been the problem. We need to accept that so that we can get to work on it and move on it.

I continue to pray for the health and recovery of those who were injured in Trenton, as well in other places, just as I will continue to work on this issue.

HONORING PENNY CELESTE FORREST

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. HANDEL). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FLORES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FLORES. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Penny Celeste Forrest of Waco, Texas, who passed away on June 15, 2018.

Penny was born in 1948 in Dallas, Texas. She was educated at East Texas State University, now known as Texas A&M University-Commerce; Baylor University; the University of Texas at Arlington; McLennan Community College; Texas State Technology College; and Texas Woman's University.

Penny was very active in our Waco community. She served on various boards, associations, and commissions, including the following: president of the Central Texas Museum District, vice president of the Austin Avenue Neighborhood Association, chair of the Boy Scouts Award Committee, chair of the Waco-McLennan County Library Commission, the McLennan County Historical Commission, the Texas State Technical College board of regents, the city of Waco Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission, the city of Waco Convention and Visitors Bureau Advisory Board, and the city of Waco Buildings and Standards Commission.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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